



**Department of Health and Human Services
Office of the Commissioner
Policy and Procedure Statement**

Policy # DHHS-08-04

Issue Date: 07/15/04

Revised Date:

I. SUBJECT

Office Attire Policy

II. POLICY STATEMENT

As Health and Human Services representatives and employees of the State of Maine, staff are expected to develop and maintain professional relationships with one another, the general public, clients, families, providers and many other organizations and individuals. Personal appearance is important in relationship development because it communicates to others how the individual views, values, and respects these relationships.

Because the Department continually strives to project a professional image, it is necessary to establish guidelines for dress and grooming that further this goal.

III. GENERAL STANDARDS

This policy applies to employees, private contractors, interns, volunteers and any other person at any time when representing the Department.

Employees are expected to present a clean and neat appearance that reflects the work situation.

Protective clothing provided pursuant to state, federal, and agency safety standards will be worn at all times as appropriate.

Clothing, footwear, and accessories should be clean and allow employees to work safely, and be free of rips, holes, fraying, and other defects or damage inappropriate to a business setting. Clothing should reflect generally accepted business standards in a comparable business setting.

Chemical compositions in many agents (including fragrances found in personal care items) pose varying health risks to some people. Therefore, products such as perfumes, cologne, and heavily scented products such as air fresheners, scented candles, and potpourri should be used conservatively. In some cases, it may be necessary to prohibit such products altogether when the health of an individual may be compromised.

IV. STANDARDS FOR ATTIRE

Attire that reflects a professional, business-like appearance appropriate to the work situation is expected of all employees. Some examples of non-business attire include: military style clothing (worn by non-military personnel) gym/athletic apparel including tee shirts, shorts, sweatshirts and sweatpants, beach/pool sandals, clothing imprinted with slogans and skin-tight clothing such as Spandex. Blue denim jeans and athletic footwear may not be worn except in special circumstances, or for dirty or unsanitary work assignments, with advance supervisory approval.

The Director of Human Resources may authorize reasonable exemptions to the application of this policy based upon medical conditions documented by the employees primary care physician, or other treating medical professional.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees are expected to comply with this policy and work cooperatively with their superiors in furthering the goals of this policy.

The Commissioner may approve modifications to this policy in facilities or other work units where special circumstances dictate. The Commissioner will consult with the Labor Management Committee when considering modifications to this policy whenever possible. All requests for policy modification must be submitted and approved in writing.

Senior management staff may grant exceptions to the general policy in special circumstances i.e. office clean up days, officially sanctioned social events, extended travel related situations, and circumstances when employees are required to report to work with limited advance notice.

The Director of Human Resources may grant reasonable exceptions to the policy based on ADA, civil rights compliance, or religious considerations.

Supervisors and managers are expected to provide guidance to employees in understanding the goals of this policy and applying the standards consistently and objectively.

07/15/04
Effective Date

John R. Nicholas
Commissioner